

# GRÄVEN-IMAGES

Caresse Crosby





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## GRAVEN IMAGES



# GRAVEN IMAGES

BY

CARESSE CROSBY

*Author of 'Crosses of Gold'*



BOSTON AND NEW YORK

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

*The Riverside Press Cambridge*

1926

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*The Riverside Press*

CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.



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GRAVEN IMAGES

SONNETS





## GRAVEN IMAGES

MAKE to thyself no graven images,  
Nor set ye idols upon land or sea;  
For God is jealous and the scripture says,  
‘Thou shalt not worship other gods but Me.’  
And yet why should the evanescent breath  
Of Heaven touch our lives and fade away?  
Should we not in our yearning challenge death,  
Remould the faint impress where Beauty lay?  
We creatures, with our feet bound down to earth,  
If now and then we kiss the stars, the sands  
Of Time must bear the mortal, pale rebirth  
Of Holy light, the wistful work of hands.  
    Must we for Beauty’s images atone;  
    Is not each Soul an image of God’s own?

## SONNETS

### AT NOON

ACROSS the heath a fluttering footpath wends,  
And heavy sunlight sleeps upon the grass.  
The air is tense with hush, the heather bends  
Drowsy with warmth, and saffron hours pass.,

Along the cliff, then down, the pathway swerves  
To where the limpid tide has paused to rest,  
A languorous libation in smooth curves,  
Upon white sands, in dreaming sunshine drest.

You cross the heath, I see you and rejoice.  
Just like a song you break the torpid trance  
Of silence, and your happy, ringing voice  
Awakes the cliffs and makes a rippling dance  
Along the waves, and noonday has no choice,  
But rubs its eyes, and laughs as you advance.

## SONNETS

### THE LAND BEYOND THE WALL

BEND down and slip beneath the pasture gate  
(Thus close to earth we breathe the sunsweet  
grass).

Up now and tread with happy feet elate  
Daisies and buttercups, a blazing mass,  
Until we reach the farthest shaded edge  
Of the bright meadow, where great oak-trees lift  
Deep viridescent arms across a ledge  
Of an old tumbling wall, and here a rift  
Serves as a threshold to our land of dreams.  
Thus clambering to the boulders' lichen top,  
Then, sinking through a leafy sea, it seems  
Out of the glare deep into shade we drop,  
From sunlight and the round of busy hours  
To cool, dim twilight and a world just ours.

## SONNETS

### NIGHT AIR

NIGHT air that stirs the mist-drenched leaves from  
dreams,  
And with cool coming treads the dew-damp lawn,  
Your breath is sweet with salt of ocean streams;  
And soon will gather perfume of the dawn  
From clematis and rose vines, slumbering deep,  
That garland drowsy blooms in dusky shower  
Above the wide-flung window, where asleep,  
She breathes the heavy darkness hour by hour.  
Her spirit bathes in pools sun-checked with gold  
And roams sweet meadows where ripe maizes  
plume,  
But when you bend the curtain's supple fold  
And lift her curls in fingers wet with brume,  
She sighs and turning dreams the Endless  
Sea,  
Cold diamond depths, and winds clean, fresh,  
and free.



## SONNETS

### LOST LONG-AGO

LIKE broken music, fragments on the air,  
Laughter, light whispers, and an indrawn sigh,  
The taking of a kiss floats up to where,  
In screen of lilacs, old thoughts, saddened, fly  
Back to that midnight of lost long-ago  
When I, too, lingered on the flower-hid path,  
And felt upon my lips your lips bent low,  
And knew the trance-like hours of aftermath.

The grass was wondersweet, mixed with your  
mouth;  
The heavens like a curtain hemmed us in,  
Ink blue. Big yellow stars above us hung;  
While mid-May's smouldering meadows ached  
with drought.  
The night was hushed and warm. There seemed  
no sin.

And, in my hair, the gathering dewdrops clung.

## SONNETS

### A SONNET

YOUR smile, I think, means nothing more nor less  
Than silken roses worn to trim your hat,  
And that you deck your lips much as you dress  
With frills to please the eye, well knowing that  
They will attract me, not as doth a flame  
The moth that blindly burns itself away,  
Nor as the lodestar doth the ocean tame,  
But in a gay, defiant sort of way,  
Like ribbons that adorn a sombre place—  
Or laces sewn to change last summer's mode.  
Your smiles are but the garments of your face  
And I accept them as your charming code.  
    Yet, never let them slip down from your eyes,  
    Lest they reveal a barren Paradise!

## SONNETS

### SEA-SPRAY

FRAGRANT and delicate against my cheek,  
Tasting of waves, and so of ocean tides,  
And of far-distant unknown shores besides,  
Where sands are strewn with camphorwood and  
teak,

And, farther still, of lands where breezes reek  
With fume of poppies, and the shallop slides  
Along the spuming silver crests, or glides  
Among the wild flamingos in the creek,

Your kiss harks back to when the world began,  
When from each glimmering island's nascent  
shoals

Your salt caress came wafting to the land.

Perfume of Crete, of Chypre—breath of Japan—  
Mist of the tropics—fresh frost of the poles—  
You blow them all about me where I stand!

## SONNETS

### THE WAVE

I stood upon the ocean's rim, I saw  
What seemed to be a feather far at sea,  
Blown shoreward by the wind, till, blindingly  
Flashed in the sun a silver-gleaming oar:  
Then nearer, with the roll of rhythmic law,  
And with an onward drive unchecked and free  
Across the moving tide it grew to be—  
A cockle-shell? An argosy of war!

Upon the prow, three mighty warriors stand  
With curls blown back, high up above the flood,  
Their helmets streaming plumèd crests of white,  
And with a shout they plunge, from where they  
stood,  
To surge across the beach, a line of light;  
Then, kneeling, sink before me on the sand.



## SONNETS

### RAIN

RAIN—slow, and ever so, falls the rain,  
On, and ever on, the sad dripping goes,  
Dull, and damp, soaked and sodden till it grows  
A hopeless burden, dragging on the brain.

Rain, fast and faster whirling, mad, insane,  
Lashes to right and left with stinging blows,  
Tears petals, mutilated, from the rose,  
And hurls wild leaves against the window-pane!

Rain, running rivers down the muddy street,  
Rain, rushing seaward from a stormy land,  
And in the gardens, rain that drips and drips.

But afterwards, clean pavements for the feet,  
A calmer, fairer ocean, rainbow-spanned,  
And roses shaking raindrops from their lips.

## SONNETS

### AMY LOWELL

An ever-widening ripple on the sea  
Catching the glint of moonlight, gyre on gyre.  
An ever-strengthening, greening, growing tree  
Whose roots thrust deep, whose leaves fly always  
          higher.

A sun-bright gull on swiftly sweeping wings,  
Dashing the spray, salt-sweet against its throat.  
A nightingale a-throb with song that rings  
Like gold and silver chimes ; near, then remote.

Gardens were always happiest where she went.  
Pansies and marigolds rejoiced to wear  
Their loveliest dresses, and the lilacs bent  
To hear her voice, she made them all so fair.  
      Unsheathed, her spirit radiates from far,  
      Glowing and fragrant as a perfumed star.

## SONNETS

### I SOUGHT A SWEET BOUQUET

I SOUGHT a sweet bouquet to give Elaine,  
And wandered desolate amid the waste  
Of last month's garden, to the fields made haste,  
Seeking some lingering flowerlet in vain —  
They all had gone; and so within my brain  
I culled the loveliest symbols that I knew,  
And on the fair white page, enraptured, drew,  
In fragrant words, this bouquet for Elaine.

'Frail sprays of silver set with leaves of gold.  
Three turquoise sea-shells, and soft silken wisps  
Of star-glow. Wine-cups. Pale pearls aureoled  
In evening, and clouds drifting. Treasure ships.  
Exquisite scarlet caskets, strange and rare.  
Blue slippered breezes. Holy perfumed prayer.'

## SONNETS

### SONNET OF THANKS

I KNEEL before Thee, God, to say a prayer  
That I may start my day with thoughts of Thee;  
To thank Thee for this sunlight and fresh air  
And for Thy breezes merrying on the sea:  
And for this carpet of rough, running sands  
That cold and clean ebbs out beneath my feet,  
For these swift, supple limbs and fair white hands,  
For those tall trees, bright gulls, and fields of wheat,  
And for the ship out there upon the ocean,  
(How far away it seems, while Thou, how near!)  
For as I plunge beneath the foam, a notion  
Persuades me that Thy voice rings in my ear.

With arms flung back upon cool waves I lie,  
Singing my prayer, 'O thank Thee, God on  
high.'

## SONNETS

### WHEN NURSE HAS GONE

NURSE shuts the door, the flames begin to fade,  
To deep and deeper dark the corners grow,  
The open window whispers to the snow,  
And, up the curtain, shadow-shapes parade.

‘I wonder if I closed the doll-house door —  
I wouldn’t care to have Angèle catch cold.  
I’d go and look, although my nurse would scold,  
If I were not afraid to cross the floor.

‘To-morrow in the light my toys will be  
Quite near at hand beside the rocking-chair  
And three small skips will bring me over there,  
But now the rug is bigger than the sea.

‘When nurse has gone, the walls tiptoe away,  
The ceiling’s twice as high as in the day!’

## SONNETS

### THE THOUGHT

I DELICATELY pluck Sweet Fancy's fragrant rose,  
That fragile flower nourished by the brain,  
And on the fresh white page in ciphered rows,  
Petal by petal give it life again.

Stem's filament through which the life-blood flows  
Must thrust deep roots between each lettered lane.  
Each emerald leaf must breathe until it glows  
As crisp as tulips after April rain.

The tint that stains the blossom like a blush  
Must not be lost, nor the elusive scent  
Of growing things, nor must a ponderous flood  
Of words destroy, or jagged edges crush  
The ravished heart of this exotic bud;  
Hybrid of soul and sonnet temperament.



## SONNETS

### ILLUSION

I WATCHED you with the future in your eyes,  
A wondrous look of secrets yet unknown;  
Your smile, a slow, sweet gesture of surmise  
Holding a brave enchantment all its own.

For you the pebbled paths lay strewn with gold,  
And phantom flowers blew to deck the way  
To that far meadow where, unguessed, untold,  
One day beyond the utmost hills you'd stray.

There in the sunshine solitude to find  
The cherished playmate in the glad, warm grass,  
To play a lifelong game of Happy Prince  
And Happy Princess through the looking-glass.

I watched you then as I have watched you since,  
Wondering that those who see the most are blind.

## SONNETS

### PARIS

Most fair and fragile city. Souveraine  
Most sweetly garmented. With miscreant eyes,  
With delicate white fingers lain crosswise  
To arch the riband silkness of the Seine -  
That ringarounds thy waist, engirdles, twines,  
Then falls and flutters to thy skirts, wide-hemmed  
With broidery of lives and loves, and gemmed  
With gardens gay, and silvery, marching lines  
Of poplars. On thy breast the moon-white gleam  
Of carven memories. In thy hair the shine  
Of soft rose-flaring lights. Eyes bright with wine,  
Where laughter laughs and mystery waits in dream.

Thy bodice holding treasures manifold,  
White marble loveliness, and ivory and gold.

## SONNETS

### THE QUEST

‘THE Never-Ending Quest’—what do you mean  
When pensively, with wistful eyes, my wife,  
You whisper, ‘There will always be between  
The laughter and the tears of daily life,  
For us, the Never-Ending Quest.’ I say  
With all humility that I, dear one,  
Still trust, still long to find the trackless way  
To meet you as the day meets with the sun,  
Or winds are wed, or lofty planets sing.  
And can it not be done? Or, as the dawn  
Eludes the dark, will this far phantom thing,  
That lip to lip we seek at once, be gone?  
    ‘Ah, love,’ you say, ‘are we not like the rest,  
And can we hope to end the endless quest?’

## SONNETS

### WITH YOU I HAVE KNOWN BEAUTY IN THE NIGHT

WITH you I have known beauty in the night,  
And watched with you the loveliness of dawn  
Come stealing to our window down the lawn,  
Until again the poetry of day's flight  
With dusk obscured the murmur of our kiss,  
Muffling with velvet touch our beating hearts.  
Hours for rapture ere the dark departs.  
Evening and morning held alike their bliss.  
Each moment spent with you passed far too swift.  
The feet of Time came dancing down our way,  
And so I drained the sweetness of each day,  
To lose no shining fragment of the gift.

With you I have known all love's radiant  
hours

And gathered them like fragrant, dewy,  
flowers.

## SONNETS

### VOICES

AMID the silence of the city's noise  
I wander up and down through busy space.  
Watch with amaze upon the wayward face  
The captive soul-bird flutter, fold and poise,  
And then sink down, completely disappear.  
I hear in poignant silence the hot blaze  
Of pregnant thought, as passing swiftly near  
Some secret youth, I feel his clamorous gaze:  
While all about me, piteous with restraint,  
The prisoned, helpless souls of passers-by  
Cry in despair their awful plangent plaint,  
'O stranger, stay and listen, it is I.'  
The city's ways are cruel with silent din;  
My soul is weak with unguessed trafficking.

## SONNETS

### THE YEARNING OF THE WHOLE

SMOOTH cylinders, of accurate luisant form.  
Frail spheres like lovely brittle porcelain plate,  
And clean-cut cubes and wedges cuneiform.  
Straight lines. Ellipsoids fine, attenuate.  
And bands of blue zigzag across a plane  
Of purple where sharp angles fall  
In gleaming points like jagged sawing rain  
Upon fair parallels made metrical.

Ah, if the cube could guess the hidden bend  
That fits beneath the oval's voiceless curve,  
Or could the angles with the levels blend,  
Would not their shadows fade, and centres swerve?

And who can tell the yearning of the whole  
When blue from green has swept away the  
soul!



## SONNETS

### TIME

TIME, like a player's oft-enacted tale,  
Unfolds its panorama to our eyes;  
Old stories and a ream of colored lies  
Tricked out with mummer's mask and painted  
veil.

And we applaud, or weep, to no avail;  
The hero conquers, and the maiden sighs  
The villain, for his ignominy, dies;  
The parts are futile, threadbare, worn and stale.

Time tries to fool us, but the paragon  
Who claims to blend and better old-world chords  
Has never equalled Nature's music quite.

Science may set new scenery anon,  
With incandescent flare may flood the boards;  
The piece was better played by candlelight.

## SONNETS

### WORLD WINNOWINGS

Is life the sum of day succeeding day,  
The content of each little hour gone,  
Repeated gestures of Time's endless play  
Additioning for on, and on, and on?

Or runs it rather in the inverse way?  
Does not the soul of man as soon as born  
Lose bit by bit the clinging shard of clay,  
Let fall a garment each succeeding morn?

Until at last quite nakedly he stands,  
Treading beneath his feet life's mound of dross,  
And knows that that which served a while is not.

Why should we then heap sand upon the sands,  
Building a bridge which one day we must cross  
To carry out world winnowings—to what?

## SONNETS

### THE GAME OF LIFE

My Cleareyed Sweetheart, yours the only way  
To play the game of life, and in my heart  
Your tawnygolden hair, and wondrous way  
You shone, stronglimbed and fair, I guard apart,  
Nor would exchange for all the price of earth —  
These memories. And so I go my way  
Bewildered by the dross, the cold, the dearth,  
And marvel that you found so brave a way  
To make of life a multicolored play,  
Where, all unheeding, you embraced the best;  
Joy of the moment, love in sunshine drest,  
With reckless, tender faith as your array.

Adventure found you joyous, unafraid —  
A kindling brilliant every pawn you played !

## SONNETS

### DAY'S END

WHEN passing homeward down some weary street  
That reeks with refuse of the summer's day  
And droops with jaded backs, and children play  
Noisy and noisome in the staling heat,  
And from the crowding walls hot shadows creep,  
Not purple, but a tarnished, sickly gray,  
I see the sun sink golden far away,  
And up above a star gleam, pure and sweet.  
I lift my head, my thoughts fly out to space;  
The stars are coming fast, I count to seven;  
But in that dreary street each tired face  
Looks to the ground. I pray God grant them grace  
And hurry on. Perhaps beauty born of Heaven  
Brings thoughts too tempting in so sad a place.

## SONNETS

### THE ENCHANTED

You were a moonbeam in my thoughts till now,  
And now you are a moonbeam in my arms ;  
You must not then look back on mortal charms,  
But only let enchantments weave your brow,  
And in my arms dissolve and so forget  
A world that is at best but tricks and lies ;  
The dream is ours, and shall the dawn that flies  
Before us through vague spheres elude us yet ?

Rest thus, a phantom gift, love's loveliest ;  
The clipped and tawny curls upon your cheek  
Shine like the golden fleece—why need I seek  
As far as Jason on some lonely quest,  
When here above the world, we two apart,  
May share the mystic treasure, heart to heart ?

## SONNETS

### DÉSENCHANTÉE

WOUNDED with passion, through the long night  
space

I've watched the lonely hours smouldering fade  
To silver dawn; from memory I've remade  
The shattered rapture of our lost embrace,  
And how I saw the stars above your face  
And felt your closing arms about me laid;  
And while your wandering lips slow-burning played  
With mine I thought love's footsteps neared the  
place;

But only for a moment; through the hills  
I tried, but could not hear the flutter of his wings,  
Or whispered promise of immortal things:  
And so, self-willed, alone, my body thrills  
For yours, while weary, uncaressed,  
I ache to feel your kisses unpossessed.



## LYRICS



## BLIND PATTERNS

Do you not know it,  
The strange feeling  
That lays soft fingers  
On the heart  
And gently lifts the latch,  
Pushes closed shutters  
Wide apart  
Until you turn to gaze  
Upon some half-remembered vista:

First a tree,  
Then silvery hills,  
And then the Sea!

And how it all seems  
As it used to be!

When, ah, yes, when?  
Why, surely there!

## LYRICS

Not very surely, though,  
And yet somewhere?

Thus, as you lean  
So puzzlingly  
Upon the ledge,  
'Twixt heart and mind  
Bang blows the blind!  
The hinges wedge  
Enduringly,  
And gone the gleam;

But who, ah, who,  
Was waiting there beneath that tree;  
And where that hillside;  
When that far-off sea?

## LYRICS

### I AM SAD

THE day is golden and the sky is blue,  
yet I am sad and sorrowful all through.  
Sad with this beauty, that is far too beautiful.  
Sad with all beauty that I'll never view.

I see a rose-filled garden at my door,  
I gaze upon the ocean from the hill,  
yet am I sad and grieve the more  
for gardens still invisible.

No matter where I go  
there'll always be  
some lovelier hidden spot,  
some moon-kissed sea,  
that will escape me.

I can never see  
Beauty's entirety.

## LYRICS

### STAR, STAR

BRAVE Star!  
You gleam afar  
Just like a brilliant smile;  
But there you are  
Alone forever through the eternal years.  
And so I think, Star, Star,  
Your ice-white radiance may be  
Frozen tears.

## LYRICS

### LOVELY, LYRIC HIPPOCRENE

LOVELY love-child of Apollo, laughing, lyric  
Hippocrene,

You, sweet sister of the swallow, daughter of the  
Huntress Queen.

In your eyes the daydream beaming, teeming with  
delights unseen,

And your waving tresses streaming all about you  
as you lean

On the marble basin dreaming thoughts that lie  
too deep to glean.

Breasts like peony petals, glowing through the  
rustling waters' sheen,

Seem like flowers, softly blowing, in a mist of  
crystal green.

Lovely love-child of Enchantment, in your eyes a  
joy serene,

All the glamour of the night lent to create you  
Hippocrene.

While Euterpe smoothed your pillow, Eros stole  
upon the scene.



## LYRICS

Flora wreathed you with the willow, Hebe danced  
upon the green.

When you smile a song goes singing down the  
winds, the worlds between.

When you laugh, gay chimes are ringing, lovely,  
lyric Hippocrene!

## LYRICS

### RUE DES QUATRE VENTS

AND when I saw my gables lift  
Their star-hung cornices and drift  
Clear cardboard-cut upon a sky  
Where homing swallows wing from high  
Adown the dying afternoon,  
I took her hand and pressed my lips  
Against her roseleaf finger-tips,  
And silently a sickle moon  
Rode, where my chimney's silhouette  
Flew slender, like a plumed aigrette.  
Then like a story hero I  
Upgathered her, all frail and shy,  
Sweet-scented as a moon-white rose,  
All yielding soft in fragrant clothes;  
And up and up, flight after flight,  
We wound into the Paris night.

## LYRICS

### I WONDER

WAY up beneath the roofs, she dwells,  
That jut and jazz against the sky.  
At morning, when the time draws nigh  
For work, and life's mad murmur swells,  
I see her bedding put to air,  
Her linnet fastened in the sun;  
Above a peignoir, half undone,  
I see her comb her golden hair.

And then she leans so wistfully  
Upon the sill, that I suppose  
She wishes she were you or I.

All day the bird sings blissfully.  
And she is gone, where to, who knows?  
At night she laughs. I wonder why.

## LYRICS

### FROM A BRIDGE

WRAPPED in a tattered mist,  
the vagrant Seine,  
Seeks her confessional  
when night is done.  
Weary with sin along her  
winding lane  
To Notre Dame her silent  
course is run.  
And as I watch her penitent  
at prayer,  
The mists dissolve into  
the sun-kissed air.

## LYRICS

### MOONLIGHT AND MAGIC LOVE

You with your wondrous smile,  
Lighting the dark awhile,  
Came like a flower  
To perfume the night;  
Bent your head down to mine,  
Gave me your lips like wine,  
Deep in a shower  
Of curls, duskybright.

Soft were the sounds you made,  
Slow slide of pearls on jade,  
Faint fall of sandal,  
And scarcely drawn sigh.  
Hands white as moths are white  
Flutter and stir the night  
Seeking the candle,  
The flame that is I.

Frail, just a phantom thing,  
Eyes made of evening,  
Mouth made of morning,  
And secretsweet side.

## LYRICS

Wondrously fashioned of  
Moonlight and magic love,  
Pale glow of dawning  
And pulse of the tide.

Slowly as shadows grow  
Heart beat to heart we go  
Into the past  
With the world far away.  
Perfect our kiss, and yet,  
Lips with slow tears are wet.  
Infinite, vast  
Is the mystical way.

Hours fly, flowing past,  
Dawn finds the day at last;  
Dreamlike and saddened  
Our lingerlast kiss.  
All the sweet of the night  
Clings to you in your flight,  
Leaving me maddened  
With magical bliss.

## LYRICS

### MIRAGE

WHEN I'm weary of the city  
And I long for desert sands,  
When I want to climb high mountains,  
Wander off with gipsy bands;

When I wish to leave the known worlds  
For mirage and caravans;  
Then I look deep in your eyes, Dear—  
Travel there to strange, far lands.



## LYRICS

### THE OTHERS

SHAME to have never fully loved,  
To have never followed free  
With strong winds filling up the sail,  
As the ship puts out to sea!

Oh, Shame to those with anchor cast  
In the oozing, sucking mud,  
Safe in the harbor, to escape  
The waves and winds and flood!

And Shame to those who look about  
To see if others see;  
To those who would conceal fair truth  
For drear propriety!

They'll never know — more sorry they —  
The sweet, fresh, vasty air  
That blows our ship away, away —  
With salt spray through the hair!

## LYRICS

### CROSS-ROADS

You turn and take the cross-road,  
And I go up the hill.

The valley road is shorter,  
But I prefer the lane  
That rambles up to Nowhere,  
And then runs down again.

I wander from the pathway,  
I frolic all along ;  
My lap I fill with daffodils,  
My heart I fill with song.

You say your way runs straighter,  
But it has nor curve, nor frill.  
You may prefer the highroad,  
But I prefer the hill !

## LYRICS

### ANOTHER TIME

WHEN I am reborn

Another time,

I'll dress in silks of almandine,

My hair with beryl I'll entwine

And perfume it with jessamine—

Another time.

Another time,

I'll quaff gold cups of Chian wine,

On amber grapes and cakes I'll dine,

And sup from platters crystalline—

When I am reborn.

When I am reborn,

I'll gather everything that's fine,

That gleams and sparkles, pavonine,

My ways shall be incarnadine—

Another time.

## LYRICS

### CONSTANCE MARTEL

C'EST toi qui ramasse les poissons sur la plage.  
C'est toi, c'est toi, c'est toi—

Constance Martel at eighty-two has work to do, has work to do. Stoops she, turns she, picks she fish from off the sands. And in her pail a rainbow swale of slippery snips and rotting tips, and many a silver smear of sole, or shark, or devil-fish she drops with joyful leer, from fingers two. And almost blind, she gives a kind of sniff and knowing peer at entrails twined, then grins to find some good bits in the stew. You'd think her back would surely crack to see her bending double; you'd think that thirty francs a year were hardly worth the trouble.

Since fishing smacks have furrowed tracks across the piscine brine, good scavenging has always been conceded to her line. 'Tis well, Constance, for future trade, that twelve great-grandchildren are made. C'est toi, c'est toi, c'est toi.

## LYRICS

### WHITE JADE

LITTLE lady, quaintly made  
From a moonlit bit of jade,  
Was it in the realm of dream,  
In some faërie, Lethean stream,  
That you plucked that lotus there,  
Fretted in your chiselled hair?

White as snowfall falling down  
Is the whiteness of your gown.  
White as mist from breathless lips  
To your taper finger-tips.  
Not the faintest emerald tint  
Here or there. No verdant hint  
Mars your purity and grace,  
Or the wanness of your face.

With your tiny hands clasped so,  
Patient little curio,  
You are like a moonbeam strayed  
From the lovely land of jade!

## LYRICS

### THE NYMPH

IF all the fountains in the world should toss  
    their radiant spray  
One after one in two bright lines from  
    here to far away,  
I'd wait until the sun had made  
    their lovely liquid rain,  
All misted greens and golden grays,  
    into a magic lane —  
And then I'd let my dress slip off,  
    fling by my shoes and all,  
And down that lane, a wanton nymph,  
    I'd dance beyond recall!

## LYRICS

### AND ARE YOU WEARY

AND are you weary of the day so soon, .  
So soon,

And are you weary, too,  
Of nights star-hung, star-strung,  
So soon, so soon?

And were you weary when the day  
was young—

Your hair in wondrous clouds about  
you swung—

And were you weary then,  
So young,  
So soon!



## LYRICS

### THE GOLDEN GOBLET

CHALICE, fair fountain of eternal life,  
What haunting legends cling within thy bowl,  
Where ruby-colored wine, warm poison-tincted,  
Met lip to lip the perfume of the soul?

Perchance some faithful Iseult, sick at heart,  
Found in thy cup the sum of happiness,  
And down her ivory throat the rose drogue slipt  
To heal the aching wound of loneliness,

While round the stem her fluttering fingers laced,  
To better hold the weight of so much love,  
And trusting, frightened eyes the carvings traced  
That rose the dwindling crimson draught above;

Until appeared twin rubies, bedded deep,  
And poppy-filled, her head bowed down in sleep.

And what of days when Kings and Princes knelt,  
Home from the wars, in some mediæval shrine

## LYRICS

Where chanting prelates blessed and gave, from  
thee,

The sacred benison of Holy wine?

Or, in the twilight of some vaulted nave,  
Glad little children in frail veils of white  
Tasted their first communion from thy rim:  
Or from thy side, some priest, the final rite?

And, holy cup, what cunning hand hath wrought  
The tempered traceries that deck thy form,  
These lovely convoluted curves, this fringe  
That makes of thee a graven, golden poem?

Who carved about thy shape these little loves,  
These angel faces, and these mating doves?

I hold thee in my hands and there I read  
The pages of thy past fused with the gold,  
And hid among the petals of thine heart  
The pages of a story, yet untold.

Thy calix filled with lethal wine for me,  
And for the one beloved eternally.

## LYRICS

### HARRY

O you whose vision baffles erudition,  
Whose path of gold the ancient creeds defined,  
By living faith, and ageless superstition,  
You scale the heights and leave me far behind!

I can but glimpse the summits of the Mountains  
Your feet thus fleetly reach, while, from below,  
The incense of accomplished dreams, streams  
upward  
To melt for you, with fragrant warmth, the snow.

Your way lies through the bright mists of the  
morning,  
I fear to lose you in their shining depths;  
So, swift, I bathe in moonlight, and, hair flying,  
I follow you, with winged shoes for my steps!

## LYRICS

### BLUE

BLUE — the blue of gentians and the blue of heaven when all the world is singing noon, and the blue of sapphires and your eyes, and also too the lovely liquid blue of lapping water through the sunny hours of June, are boon enough for some; but I, I know no blue so pure as through the wistful window of my mind that looks and leans upon the other side of afternoon. When from the frozen pond just hid from view, I hear the empty brittle hue of children and renew the sharp, sweet, shattered edges of regret, so sad, so clear, so blue.

## LYRICS

### LEDA

ANKLE-DEEP amid the rushes  
Leda stands  
Sparkling against an inland sea,  
Tossing white crumbs upon a sapphire lake,  
And watching,  
Wide-eyed and wonderingly,  
A monarch bird sail by  
Who scatters like bright leaves before a gale  
The little, brilliant water-fowl  
About her knee.

Wheeling majestically  
Straight to her alabaster side  
The creature comes,  
Nips from her hand  
The manna, haughtily.  
She laughs and proffers more;  
Then mockingly  
Puts to her coral lips  
The final, covet, bit.

## LYRICS

But with a hiss  
The Swan,  
Swift, serpentine, and sure,  
Spirals her bosom, curving amorously,  
Slips past her ivory throat,  
And this time,  
Lingeringly,  
Steals from her fragrant mouth  
The wheaten prize,  
Tosses it by  
Disdainfully,  
And stays to kiss the blushing throat,  
And in the opening shelter of his wings,  
To fold her milk-white thigh.

## LYRICS

### IN THE GARDEN BEHIND THE MOON

THE Star Flower grows  
In heavenly rows  
In the garden behind the Moon,  
And the angels at dusk  
With delicate hands  
Gather them lightly,  
Rose, lily, and musk —  
Star Flowers under the Moon.



## LYRICS

### I DON'T CARE A BIT

I DON'T care a bit if you weep.  
If you sigh, it is nothing to me.  
There are reasons enough for your woe,  
My heart is like granite, but, oh !  
When you smile, then, you poor little thing,  
I feel I am going to cry !

## LYRICS

### CHEZ MADELEINE

ONCE I was asked  
to visit a little girl,  
and I left home  
very excited.  
I didn't mind saying good-bye  
to my mother  
or my father  
or to any one,  
because I was very excited ;  
and anyway I could come back  
when I wanted to.  
When I left the familiar places behind,  
and the train  
rushed through new bright meadows,  
I thrilled.

'All out, all out !'  
sang the man.

## LYRICS

I climbed down from the train,  
and then I saw  
a lovely lady waiting—

All in chiffon and airy fairy lace,  
very beautiful I thought.

‘I am Madeleine’s Mother.’

‘How do you do.’

(Not quite like a mother,  
more like a doll.)

Madeleine’s Mother  
had a strange gay laugh.

Madeleine’s Mother  
smelt sweet and warm.

She kissed me on the back of the neck,  
and their house

was full  
of things.

She was always out when we went to bed;  
but she was always in  
when we went to walk,  
and we always wore our hats

## LYRICS

and our gloves.

And there was a garden,  
but no fields — and you mustn't  
step off the paths.

Madeleine didn't have a father,  
but she had  
a lot, a lot of  
uncles.

And she had a friction instead of  
a bath,  
and some wine or something  
instead of  
milk.

I like milk very much.

Once Madeleine said,  
'I know a funny thing' — and it wasn't,  
and I cried.

Next day I had a pain,  
and next day

I went  
Home.

## LYRICS

My Mother put me early to bed,  
And I had some milk  
and a hot bath,  
and I  
snuggled.

I was happy and so glad.  
The window was open for  
the night.  
I dreamt that when I grew up  
I was going on a long journey  
far away to  
Paris.  
I hope I will like it better  
than my visit to  
Madeleine's —

## LYRICS

### I'D RATHER LIVE FAR UP THE HILL

I'D rather live far up the hill  
In a hut, than down below  
In Grand Hotels with electric bells  
Where stupid people go.

My door upon the faërie foam  
Of daybreak opens wide;  
If all the Grand Hotels were mine  
I'd never go inside!

## LYRICS

### A LOVELY LADY IN A WOOD

A LOVELY LADY in a wood  
Sat down to comb her hair,  
And rearrange her silver snood  
And make herself most fair.

Her hair came tumbling like a fall  
Of sungold all about,  
And laughed and danced most merrily  
On being thus let out.

But though the Lady combed and preened  
Her tresses in the snood,  
A truant curl hung down her back  
When she came out the wood!

## LYRICS

### AU ROND POINT

I LOVE, I love the funny man  
Who sells the toy balloons;  
He's like a rusty anchor,  
An anchor for blue moons.  
I'd be afraid away he'd sail  
If he were not so fat.

I'm glad the toy balloon man  
Is just like that.

The wind has mown the petals  
From off the tilleul trees,  
And soon the colored baubles  
Will float upon the breeze,  
For here come Jean and Nicolette  
And here comes Georgie Cohn.

How awkward the balloon man looks  
Now all his wares have flown!



## LYRICS

### LITANIE DES BELLES HEURES

L'HEURE pâle et sombre, d'un seul triste cierge,  
illuminée dans l'ombre.

L'heure chantante d'or, et le frisson essor des  
sonnettes.

Dans ton jardin l'heure quand tes yeux, si bleus,  
prirent la douce couleur d'amour et des  
fleurs.

L'heure joyeuse que je cueille, sur la pente, toute  
seule.

Parmi les livres, assise, l'heure lente, heureuse,  
perdue, errante.

L'heure qui sonne l'hallali.

L'heure parfumée de danse, dentelée d'élégance  
où jaillissent les ganse.

L'heure vêtue des rêves et des roses romances.

L'heure nuance des nuances.

## LYRICS

### OVER THE WALL

QUIET — so quiet — hushed — not at all  
Like anywhere else, this side of the wall.

Bending above us a big oak spreads  
Wide-woven foliage over our heads.

The grasses are green with moss and with mould,  
And you are the Princess the story-books told.

A sunbeam has dropped through the leaves to your  
hair  
And wisely is weaving its goldenness there;

And I scatter violets over you, Sweet,  
While a butterfly kisses your little bare feet.

Quiet — so quiet — hushed — not at all  
Like anywhere else, this side of the wall.

## LYRICS

### FUMES

MUSING in perfumed reverie I know  
That precious moments race away and flow  
Into oblivion, that beyond my walls,  
Curtained and damask-hung, there softly falls  
The beat of time, but pillowed deep  
In scented, silken down, and half asleep,  
I let them go. Why crowd those hours more  
That are already far too full? My door,  
Once opened, flings me to the strife.  
Why should I add my weariness to life?

## LYRICS

### SEA-SONG

GIVE me your hand, just so,  
Lean on the wind and go  
Over the hilltop  
Away to the sea.  
Like this the swallows fly  
Into the blithesome sky.  
O we must never stop—  
Swallows are we !

Over the pointed pines,  
Over the pond that shines  
Bright as a pearl upon  
Bodice of green ;  
Over the winding lanes,  
Over the smiling planes,  
Blown by the breezes on  
Through the sun's sheen.

Up, ever up, and then  
Down to the sea again,

## LYRICS

Skimming the foam  
At the edge of the land;  
And as we dip and rise,  
Spray in our mouth and eyes,  
Feel the cool comb  
Blowing over the sand.

O let us always be  
Sea-birds that seek the sea;  
Wind in our wings  
And our way without charts.  
Give me your hand, just so,  
Lean on the wind and go.  
Beautifully rings  
The sea-song in our hearts!



**A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD**





## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

As I wandered alone one Easter Morn  
In the fresh, faint hours when souls are born,  
I paused near the City gate to gaze  
At a strange little shop, and in amaze  
To read the signboard, gaily hung,  
Where, blazoned in words of every tongue,  
In English, Arabic, and Dutch,  
In Russian, French, and others, such  
As Brahmins use in Hindustan  
Or geisha girls in far Japan,  
In tongues that echo all the way  
From Buenos Ayres to Mandalay,  
This Legend painted gold I saw,  
CLOTHES FOR THE SOUL. Though it said no more,  
Its jaunty look in that sleepy street,  
And a threshold grooved by myriad feet,  
Spoke the worth of the Ancient House  
Whose polyglot sign was there to rouse  
A sense of shy necessity

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

In souls new-come from Eternity,  
As it swung near the gate where they alight  
On earth in strange, immodest plight.  
For naked as newborn babies some  
Needful of earthly clothing come  
Scantily veiled in pearl-grey mist;  
Others, trailing, from throat or wrist,  
Gossamer cloud wisps shining bright  
With the silver sheen of eternal light;  
But few with raiment fit to bear  
Earth's usage, or the wear and tear  
Of busy life. So newborn souls  
Flock to this shop to view the rolls  
Of satins and silks, of woollens and tweeds,  
Of cambric and cottons for worldly needs;  
Or to find, on the warehouse shelves,  
Ready-made garments and fit themselves  
With sober suit or gaudy cloak,  
Or cap, or mantle, or skirt, or toque.  
While in the cupboards that line the wall  
Are shoes and socks for large and small,  
And hats and gloves for every sort  
Of head and hand; indeed, there is naught

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

That cannot be found in some odd nook  
Or tucked away on some curtained hook.  
And those who enter the shop in quest  
Of suitable clothing depart full dressed,  
While customers who return for more,  
Or one size larger than before,  
Are politely served with charming grace  
By the little old man who runs the place.  
(All this I learnt, as the clock struck seven,  
From a crossing sweep on the road to Heaven.)

I gazed amazed at the shining brass,  
Wide-open door, and casement glass  
Where tulips bloomed on the window-ledge,  
Forming a lovely yellow hedge,  
Shading from clear canary hue  
Through brilliant tones of orange to  
Frail blossoms, tinted faint as flax,  
With crisping petals pale as wax ;  
It seemed to me an early hour  
To open shop, but each gay flower  
Beckoned, and, having the time to spare,  
I decided to glance at the merchandise there.

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

I crossed and rapped at the wide-flung door,  
Lifting the knocker's polished claw,  
And as I waited for reply  
A shivering newborn soul drew nigh,  
Wrapped in a scanty shift of cloud.  
She timidly slipt by, I bowed,  
And, following on her small bare heels,  
I entered the room where each one deals.  
A rafted room, with dusty nooks  
And a counting-house desk piled high with books,  
With pens and papers overrun.  
A casement through which the rising sun  
Beamed on a bird in gilded bars,  
Caressed the jonquils, kissed the jars  
Of mignonette, and the silvered hair  
Of the dear old fellow sitting there.

The wizened merchant seemed in doubt  
Which of us he should single out  
To serve the first; so I smiled and said,  
'Pray, Sir, the lady came ahead.'  
Then, turning to the shelves, I found  
Coats of all patterns to abound.

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Morning jackets, broadcloth coats,  
Waterproofs and redingotes,  
Military capes and cloaks,  
Suits for hunting, suits for boats,  
Tailor-made and dignified  
Top-coats brown, and grey I spied.  
Some were large and some were small,  
But the finest of them all  
Was of velvet, frogged and trimmed  
With silken braid ; had buttons rimmed  
With gold, and it was gaily lined  
With sea-green silk, a splendid find  
To wear at night before my fire  
Reading, alone with a favorite briar.  
And more, it was a perfect fit.  
I tried it on, I found that it  
Became me well. So I advanced  
Resplendently arrayed, and chanced  
To glimpse within an alcove's bend  
The gay delight of my new friend  
Who twirled before a looking-glass  
In wide pink skirts, a frilly mass,  
Beneath which gleamed a small bronze shoe,

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

And, topping all, a hat of blue,  
Framing the lips and guileless eyes  
Of one just dropt from Paradise.  
She blew a kiss to me, and laughed  
(A kiss a little child might waft).  
'I'll take this dress,' I heard her say,  
'But I have naught wherewith to pay.'

The merchant bowed his wrinkled head.  
'Indeed you honor me,' he said.  
'And all I ask of such as you  
Is a song, or a prayer, or a smile or two.'  
'Then, may I sing to earn my gown?'  
She turned to me, 'Kind Sir, sit down,  
For if you do not mind to wait  
I'll pay my first account to date.'  
The old man placed for me a chair,  
Took out a flute, began an air.  
At once the bird began to sing,  
The lady joined; a magic ring  
The sunbeams made upon the floor  
While Easter chimes stole through the  
door,

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

And matins mingled with the song  
The maiden sang that Easter morn.

Soft melody o'erflowed the room,  
Seeped to the corners' gabled gloom,  
While cadenced echoes lapped the beams  
Of the raftered roof, and eddying streams  
Of music ran along the wall,  
Advancing down the narrow hall,  
And then receding back again,  
Like overtones of summer rain.  
I spied across the window-sill  
Easter bonnets standing still,  
Listening to the heavenly air  
That captivated passers there.

The notes died out, the faërie lute  
And sweet angelic voice were mute.  
I rubbed my eyes, for it almost seemed  
As though the song were surely dreamed.  
But with a sweet laugh, Heavenmade,  
The lady asked, 'Is my bill well paid?'  
The shopman acquiesced apace,



## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

While crinkling smiles lit up his face;  
And my response was such a rush  
Of words that she began to blush,  
And begged that I should not concede  
Such merit to so small a deed.  
'I must be hurrying on, 'tis late,  
And Easter mass begins at eight,'  
She said. So I at once replied,  
'I'm going also ; may I guide  
Your steps?' Said she, 'I see no harm :  
You are most kind' ; so arm in arm  
Into the morning light we stepped.  
My heart whirled round and my  
                    pulses leapt ;  
For I who wandered all alone  
An hour before, now held my own  
With any cavalier in town.  
No other maid possessed a gown  
More frilly, fresh, and Easter sweet,  
Than my companion, or so neat  
An ankle, or so Heaven-sent  
A bonnet. Every passer bent  
Approving glance upon my choice.



## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

And I, enchanted by her voice,  
Traversed the square as in a cloud,  
With head held high, enraptured, proud.  
I bought her violets at the door,  
And when we knelt upon the floor  
Within the cool cathedral depth,  
While over us dim twilight wept  
And far-off voices toned strange prayers,  
An incense hung in misty layers  
Before the altar, luminate  
With candlelights and golden plate,  
I, bowing, thanked the Holy Ghost  
And God for this sweet Lady most—  
While up above our heads there glowed  
A petalled window like a rose,  
Through which the sunlight fell in showers  
Refreshing all the Easter flowers.  
The organ made so fine a din  
That keeping silent seemed a sin.  
I lifted up my voice and sang.  
'Venite Adoremus' rang  
Like victory's pæan, up and out  
To Heaven in a mighty shout,

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Until with anthems glorified  
The very stones were vivified.

I downwise watched the snowy frill,  
Upon the lady's throat, lie still,  
Then tremble like a white moth wing  
When sweetly she began to sing.  
With pious joy this filled my heart,  
Till of a sudden, with a start,  
I realized where my thoughts had strayed  
While Easter Alleluias played.  
So down I humbly knelt, and these  
Were the words I prayed upon my knees :  
'O God, to covet is a sin,  
Yet God forgive me if I've been  
Transgressing; grant to me this soul  
To be all mine to make me whole.  
With her sweet counsel in my heart,  
My former self and I shall part,  
And I will be from this day on  
A better Man. I swear upon  
These sacred stones, and holy place;  
Dear Lord, be kind and grant me grace.'

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

I think God heard me, for His smile  
In a breeze of light blew down the aisle  
As when, in some deep cavern's shade,  
A brightness strangely grows, not made  
By any earthly agency,  
But in ourselves seems most to be.  
A radiate apotheosis  
As chastening as an angel's kiss!

The congregation, as a ledge  
Of sand will crumble at the edge,  
And ebb away with ocean tide,  
Went out, and left us side by side;  
While far away, like lost winds, stirred  
Echoes of music, never heard  
Except in zones of pure delight  
Where notes wing Heavenwards in flight,  
Too swiftly gone to half express  
The fluttering, finger-tipped caress  
Of that most perfect symphony —  
Song of the Soul's infinity.

We silently tiptoed away;  
I could not find a word to say,

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

And felt embarrassed, almost rude,  
For I could not shake off the mood  
Of rapturousness at once, and more  
I felt, as we passed out the door,  
That I had ventured further there  
Than I had ventured anywhere.  
But once upon the sun-white square  
I gained my poise, the open air  
Unloosed my tongue. I begged that she  
Would stroll awhile where tracery  
Of lindens domed the pebbled walk  
Beyond the Avenue, and talk.

While hurrying cars swept in and out  
We tacked across. A knockabout  
With helm to starboard, helm to lee,  
Manœuvring on a breezy sea,  
Where yacht and cruiser, skiff and sloop,  
From hither, thither, dart and swoop,  
Might well have envied us the race  
We steered across that crowded Place.  
Once safely on the further side  
I breathed a sigh, and as her guide

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

I pointed out at her request  
A near-by bench where we might rest.  
The lady, sighing pensively,  
'All this is new,' she said, 'to me.  
In Heaven all the paths are grown  
With pansies and the streets are sown  
With clover, while the children play  
Without a nurse the livelong day.  
Though there are none with velvet smocks  
And none with lace-trimmed muslin frocks,  
Still there are none in poverty  
Of tatters. I would rather see  
These tiny bodies all quite bare  
Than some with only rags to wear.  
And when I was a little child  
I romped with birds and rabbits wild.  
How dull to have to pet a toy  
Of sawdust, like that little boy  
Who sits beside his nurse and sighs  
With strangled laughter in his eyes!  
I cannot understand your earth  
Where freedom has so little worth.'  
With tears her eyes were overrun

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

As though a mist obscured the sun.  
Then suddenly, as lightning glows,  
'What lovely, lovely things are those?'  
She cried; for, carrying festoons  
Of brilliant airy toy balloons,  
The Prince of Hawkers at his stand  
Was crying wares from Wonderland.  
Enmeshed and tangled in his net  
The fragile bubbles, violet  
And almandine and indigo,  
Orange and crimson lake, aglow  
With whirling scenes of street and sky,  
Dazzled the gaze of passers-by.  
Each sphere was caught in slender check  
By cotton thread. Thus at his beck  
The vendor held his gay bouquet  
Until each bloom was sold away.

And soon, as though the breeze had mown  
The petals from a rose full blown,  
We saw the salesman, quite despoiled  
Of foliage, count the pennies moiled  
From children running here and there

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Chasing the bubbles down the air;  
Until, escaping through the trees,  
Blown skyward by a gentle breeze,  
The playthings flew this land of ours  
And disappeared like happy hours.  
'Perhaps I'll find them later on  
In heaven, for they've surely gone  
That way,' she laughed. 'I never saw  
A lovelier sight; the children know  
The best of what is here below.'  
And I, chagrined at her disdain  
Of ripened judgment, made it plain.

'You've not yet seen the River flow  
Between the quays where flowers grow,  
Or watched upon a bridge's span  
The market barge's caravan  
Come floating down the waterways  
Piled with fruit of summer days—  
Mounds of apples, heaps of pears,  
Saffron melons, quince in layers,  
And drowsing in the poop's high shade  
Gladioli all arrayed

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

In mauve and amethyst and rose;  
Hydrangeas nodding in a doze;  
And bits of awning making tents  
Where cradles rock in indolence;  
And tiny mongrels, in their sleep,  
Growl, the wandering watch to keep.  
The queens of these enchanting floats  
Dress in azure petticoats;  
One hand the massive tiller plies,  
The other shades amazeful eyes,  
While to their gaze, fantastical,  
The city rises wall on wall —  
To me all else is in eclipse  
Beside these Harvest Treasure Ships.'

'Oh, let us go!' the lady cried,  
'Down by the busy riverside.  
I long to see the peasants bring  
Golden stores from harvesting.'  
But I was doomed her joy to quench,  
For not until the August drench  
Of sun should ripen fruit and grain  
Would Harvest Days begin again.



## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

It was not treating April well  
To slight her charms and never tell  
The wonders of her store,  
Or laud the pantomime of summer more.  
And so I urged that straightaway  
We watch the fountains toss their spray,  
Like crested plumage twinkling,  
Or frosted dewdrops sprinkling. —  
This picture so beguiled the Dear  
That, as a weather-vane will veer  
From East to West with changing breeze,  
She cried, 'Oh, yes, the Fountains, please.'

I hailed a fiacre from the square  
Where charioteers with snow-white hair  
Sat dozing in the drowsy sun,  
Their heads adream with wonders done  
In bygone days; chins sunk to where  
Bright buttons lend a fighting air  
To frayed lapels. The bony hacks  
In relaxation droop their backs  
Against the shafts, with sagging knees  
Like flimsy straws, and gently wheeze

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

As they too meditate their youth  
While dreams and sunlight seep the truth.

Shook free from sleep, the first in rank  
With whiplash flicked a raw-boned flank,  
Gathered the reins, and debonair  
Gee'apped his steed across to where  
We stood. Then down the sunlit street  
From kerb to kerb old 'Marguerite'  
Meandered in a zigzag trot  
Until we reached the Garden spot  
Where we were bound. There on the lawns  
We strolled amid the marble fauns  
And Goddesses whose chiselled grace  
Lent Old-World beauty to the place,  
While in the allées, thickly hedged  
With cypress, whispering lovers pledged  
To be as constant as the boy  
Whose carven arms are clasped, in joy,  
About the charms of her whose face  
Forever tempts his sweet embrace.

The lawns were viridescent proof  
That Persia's loveliest woven woof

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Could not excel the silken sheen  
That carpeted Nature's demesne.  
Her loom she'd set with cunning care  
So that the sward was everywhere  
A thick soft web of mossy green,  
While walls of leafy emerald screened  
The paths. 'This charming verdant place  
Was trimmed with dainty flower lace,  
And broidered with forget-me-nots  
And yellow pansies, lots and lots  
Of giroflée, and daisies pink, —  
The kind that always makes you think  
Of little girls at dancing class, —  
And these were patterned on the grass  
Like flowers on a painted chintz,  
All done in April's freshest tints.

From far we saw a silver cloud  
Of mist that aureoled a crowd  
Of children at the fountain's side  
Whose toyland schooners skimmed the tide  
Encompassed by the basin's rim  
Of fragile stone. With sails atrim

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

The tiny yachts ploughed through a sea  
That lapped the shores deliciously.  
Shrill shouts and caperings of fun  
Announced a race had just begun,  
And we arrived in time to see  
The 'Foam Queen's' thrilling victory,  
Whose owner in ecstatic haste  
Fell tumbling in up to his waist.  
His sudden plunge caused us to gasp,  
But with the 'Foam Queen' in his grasp,  
Both dripping wet, the boy and boat  
Bobbed up triumphantly, afloat.  
And, none the worse for this odd bath,  
He, we, and all began to laugh,  
Till round us echoed many times  
The merriment like silver chimes.  
His nurse was primly much displeased;  
So, when he winked at us and sneezed,  
The children at so fine a sight  
Increased their shouts of sheer delight.  
I found some pennies in my purse,  
And, with a wary look at Nurse,  
I purchased at a neighboring stand

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Lollipops for all the band.  
And as we left the jolly rogue,  
The candied sweets were so in vogue  
That 'Thank yous' somehow lost their way  
And eyes expressed what lips should say.

As far ahead as we could see  
In golden-sanded symmetry  
Lay stretched a dazzling sun-white lane  
Where fountains, fragrant as spring rain,  
Rose glowing on their silver stems  
Like frail, exotic, floral gems  
From Babylonia's woods of rose,  
Or Omar's mystic garden close.  
And, as we neared the first in line,  
The sunbeams made a radiant shine  
Of colors in a rainbow trail  
Across the showering argent veil.  
The waters of the second fell  
In tearful, myth-begotten spell,  
Pellucid drops from weeping eyes,  
Forever falling, plashed with sighs  
And memories of Pirene's woe

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

In Corinth years and years ago.  
The third was taken unaware ;  
A wind came blowing through its hair  
And tossed its tendrils every way  
Till it became a bright Sea Fée,  
Astream with ocean, laughing low,  
With tresses waving in the blow.

Reluctantly we left them there,  
The tasselled spray, the waving hair,  
The iridescent rainbow veil,  
The pool where toyland frigates sail.  
My thoughts went back to early dawn  
When my sweet friend was still unborn,  
And to the many days before  
When life for me held nothing more  
Than fact and action. Fancy's touch,  
With all her sweetness, was of such  
Æsthetic tinge that I was fain  
To shun her charms and to disdain  
Those gems of spiritual worth,  
Keeping my mind bound close to earth.  
And all the wide chromatic range

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Of vision and the dim and strange,  
Vast altitudes of waking dreams,  
The flux and flow of hidden streams,  
Faint chimeras like faërie smiles,  
Mirages seen for miles and miles,  
And pilgrim pathways leading straight  
To where the Vestal Virgins wait; —  
All these for me were hid away  
Until this thrice-blest Easter Day.

It was on this new life I mused  
As I retraced my way, bemused  
Completely by my spirit's call  
To hers; and that her parasol  
Screened her soft eyes from mine was well,  
For I was quite at loss to quell  
The ardor of my gaze, or hide  
My love from those on either side.  
But when we reached the vaulted bridge  
That spanned the river, gained the ridge  
Midway above the current's flow,  
I felt my love so boundless grow  
That I was stifled with a sigh.

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

She turned to me : 'This is good-bye,'  
She whispered ; 'I must find  
A home and lodging. O so kind  
You've been that it is hard to leave  
You thus, it makes me grieve ;  
But surely it were not quite right  
Or proper that we stay at night  
Together ; it were not sublime  
Unless you want me all the time.'  
'O Darling, Little Loveliest Love,  
I want you so, all else above,  
That if you'll trust yourself to me  
This evening married we will be.'  
A rosy blush crept up her cheek,  
Crept down also to where the meek  
White roundness of her little breasts  
Grew rosy too, like snowy crests  
Of hills turned radiant in the eyes  
Of Phaëton across the skies.  
'You truly want me evermore,  
And afterwards in Heaven, or  
In Purgatory, if from guile  
We must be purified awhile?



## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

To let me enter in your heart  
That you may be the counterpart  
Of me, and I the other half  
Of you? You see I could not laugh  
And merry be, unless it were entirely  
I yield myself, dear friend, to thee.'  
'God bless you, Little Darling Soul,  
I pray that you will make me whole;  
And I cannot imagine how  
I lived without you until now.  
Until to-day I never saw the sunlight shine  
Like beaten gold or topaz wine;  
I never saw the river dash  
Beneath me like a silver sash  
That winds about the city's waist,  
Then flutters through the market-place;  
I never saw the fountains grow  
Like unsheathed blossoms row on row,  
Their petals blowing crystal pale  
As diamond raindrops in a gale;  
Nor yet a multicolored blaze  
Of toy balloons, like yellow maize  
And poppies, yes, and gentians, too,

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Until I saw these things with you.  
And even the Cathedral wore  
A beauty lovelier than before :  
A beauty gleaned from every side —  
Frailty from Chartres, and warrior pride  
From Rheims, from Burgos, strength.  
Toledo's cold, mysterious length  
Was added, and Sevilla's grace,  
Charm of Milano's granite lace,  
Saint Peter's fervent holy power,  
And Notre Dame's sweet saintly dower.  
Since you have come, the earth has worn  
Enchantments rare and multiform ;  
With you I wonder, open-eyed,  
At well-known features, beautified.'

I took her hand and pressed my lips  
Against her roseleaf finger-tips.  
She dropped her eyes ; I just could hear  
The whispered words, ' I love you, Dear.'  
Elatedly, I saw the need  
Of action, so with happy speed  
I took her arm and then and there

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

We started off, but whither, where  
To go we knew not, till she thought,  
'The shop where my new clothes were bought!'  
It seemed a very natural thing  
That we should buy a wedding ring  
Where we had met, and, after, search  
To find a license and a church.  
'It is so thrilling to be wed  
The very day I'm born,' she said.

We found the shopman all alone  
Playing at chess, and deeply thrown  
In problems far beyond our powers  
(He said they took him hours and hours).  
He heard our romance with delight.  
He wrung our hands, said we were right  
To come to him, then rummaged round  
Upon the shelves, upon the ground,  
And in the drawers along the wall,  
Until at last, beneath a tall  
Blue jar of Delft, he spied a fold  
Of parchment with a seal of gold,—  
The most enormous paper seal,

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

Exactly like a toy pinwheel.  
This document he gave to me,  
Chuckling the while delightedly.  
With odd amaze my eyes were filled  
To see, in letters neatly quilled,  
Our names and ages clearly traced,  
With dates and data rightly placed.  
And overcome by happiness  
I thanked him for his gentillesse.  
'I know a priest,' he said, 'who waits  
Until the closing of the gates  
To marry those who wish to bind  
Their lives together. Shall I find  
This holy man? I have no doubt  
He willingly will help you out.'

. . . . .  
Thus once again within the nave  
We knelt; our humble thanks we gave.  
And there, quite hushed, our troth was plight,  
Hallowed by mellow vesper light.  
When with our lips we sealed the prayer,  
I entered Heaven unaware,  
And from the moment that we kissed

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

I moved as in a golden mist.  
I trod, as on enchanted feet,  
Out of the church and down the street,  
Until we saw my gables lift  
Their star-hung cornices, and drift  
Clear cardboard-cut upon a sky  
Where homing pigeons winged from high  
Adown the dying afternoon;  
While silently a silver moon  
Rode, where my chimney's silhouette  
Flew slender, like a plumed aigrette.

Then, like a story hero, I  
Upgathered her, all frail and shy,  
Sweet-scented as a moon-white rose,  
All yielding soft in fragrant clothes,  
And up and up, flight after flight,  
We wound into the Paris night.  
Thus cradled in my arms she lay,  
Softer and lighter all the way,  
Until, on drawing near my door,  
She almost seemed to waft before.  
I had to hold her tightly pressed

## A LEGEND PAINTED GOLD

To keep her resting on my breast.  
I put her down and turned the key.  
With sweetest eyes, she looked at me,  
Then entered in, and with a sigh  
We closed the door, My Soul and I.









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